[Prof. Prem Dhumal]

opment Programme launched by Forest and Environment Department various schemes are run by various States and it is proposed to start such schemes in some other States also.

Owing to cutting of trees, soil erosion has increased in Una district of Himachal Pradesh. Seventy three rivulets merge in Swan river which flows through this district. Every year Una district becomes a victim of the devastating floods, which causes destruction on properties and lives there. At the same time thousands of acres of fertile land is submerged and filled with sand and ready crops are destructed. Due to this devastating floods, on the one hand lives, properties and land is lost, on the other hand the environment of the entire district is being polluted.

If a survey of this area is undertaken by the Forest and Environment department and a scheme is launched under this programme, it can check the growing desert area and loss of life and property to the tune of crores of rupees can be saved and at the same time 28,000 hecters of agricultural land which has turned into desert due to floods in Swan and the other 73 rivulets can be developed as fertile land. Sugarcane and groundnut can be produced in this land at a large scale and on the basis of that sugar and vanaspati ghee mills can be set up and the environmental conditioning can be improved.

As such I request the Central Government to give maximum assistance to desert development scheme as a matter of top priority to save the people of this area from losses and it will help in supplying foodgrains in sufficient quantity to many other parts of the country.

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.25 p.m.

13.26 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till twenty-five minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

The Lok Sabha re–assembled after Lunch at twenty seven minutes past Fourteen of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER – *in the Chair*]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri M.M. Jacob will make the statement.

14.28 hrs.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

(i) Bomb exploison in a mosque in Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh

(*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): Sir, According to the report received from the Government of Uttar Pradesh, the District Magistrate, Faizabad has informed U.P. Government on phone that in the morning of 31st March, 1992, around 4.45 A.M., a bomb exploded in an old mosque in Mohalla Kasai Bara in Faizabad city which was under renovation. The bomb explosion caused a hole in a wall in the rear part of the Mosque and cracks in the roof and other walls of the mosque, as well as cracks in three adjoining houses. Two persons sustained minor injuries; they were discharged from hospital after being given them first aid treatment.

The DM has informed that in this regard a case is being registered. It is not possible at this stage to indicate whether the bomb was hurled by some person or it had been planted in the mosque before the incident took place. The hand of terrorists does not seem to be involved but it appears to be the work of some mischievous elements.

Immediately after the incident, there was some resentment among a section of the people and they demanded that the culprits be apprehended immediately.

The District Administration is fully alert, and patrolling by the Magistrate and police is being undertaken.

The District Magistrate, Faizabad has also stated that 60–65 persons offered prayers as usual in the mosque after the bomb explosion. There does not seem to be visible communal tension over the incident. The District Administration has also assured to the local public that it will identify the culprits and take strict action against them. Meanwhile, action is being taken to repair the damages caused to the mosque in consultation with the management of the mosque.

(ii) Progress of investigation into the Bofors Case

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): Sir, In the past few days, several Hon'ble Members have sought to know the latest position in respect of the investigations in the Bofors case, specially in the context of certain reports which appeared in a Swedish newspaper, in February '92, and subsequently in our newspapers. Apprehensions have been expressed that the investigations are not being seriously pursued.

In this background, I am placing before this august House the recent progress of the case, to enable appreciation of the correct facts. However, it is pertinent to mention that this case is sub-judice in Courts in India and abroad.

As this House is aware, investigations in the Bofors case stand entrusted to the CBI which had registered a preliminary Enquiry on 8th Nov '88. The House would recall that an MOU was signed between Govt. of India and the Swiss Federal Government, on 20th Feb '89, to provide, mutual assistance in criminal matters. I may recall that two Letters Rogatory were sent to the Swiss authorities in Feb '89 and Oct '89. Subsequently, the CBI registered a Regular Case on 22nd Jan. '90.

The CBI took up the matter with the Swiss and Swedish authorities, seeking their assistance in the investigations. As a result of the CBI's efforts, the Swiss authorities froze certain Swiss Bank accounts on 26th January, 1990. A letters Rogatory was issued by the Special Judge, Delhi, on 7th February 1990, which was presented to the Swiss authorities. The investigating Judges at Geneva and Zurich accepted the Letters Rogatory. Thereafter, appeals were filed by certain parties in the Cantonal Courts at Zurich and Geneva. I shall now briefly describe the progress of cases in Courts in Switzerland and India and the request for assistance made to Sweden.

Zurich: The Cantonal Court at Zurich dismissed the Appeal filed before it. Consequently, authorised signatories/beneficiaries of M/s. A.E. Services Ltd., one of the recipients of payments from M/s.Bofors, preferred an Appeal before the Federal Court of Switzerland. This Appeal was also dismissed. on 13th November, 1990. Thereafter, on 13th December, 1990, the CBI received copies of the documents relating to the bank account of A.E. Services Lt. maintained at Nordfinanz Bank, Zurich.